

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An optical compensatory sheet which consists of a polymer film containing a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{\max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured~~ is measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $R_{th590} - R_{th450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$.

Claim 2 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the polymer film has an Re retardation value of Re450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 10 to 60 nm, and an Re retardation value of Re590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 20 to 70 nm, said values of Re450 and Re590 satisfying the condition of $Re_{590} - Re_{450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$.

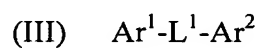
Claim 3 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the polymer film is made of cellulose ester.

Claim 4 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the polymer film is a film stretched with a stretching ratio of 3 to 100%.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound has a linear molecular structure.

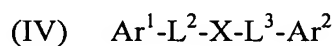
Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is a liquid crystal.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 1, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is represented by the formula (III):



in which each of Ar^1 and Ar^2 independently is an aromatic group; and L^1 is a divalent linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, an alkenylene group, an alkynylene group, a divalent saturated heterocyclic group, -O-, -CO- and a combination thereof.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 7, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is represented by the formula (IV):



in which each of Ar^1 and Ar^2 independently is an aromatic group; each of L^2 and L^3 independently is a divalent linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, -O-, -CO- and a combination thereof; and X is 1,4-cyclohexylene, vinylene or ethynylene.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): An image display device comprising having an optical compensatory sheet, wherein the optical compensatory sheet consists of a polymer film containing a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured is~~ measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $\text{Rth590-Rth450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A polarizing plate comprising a pair of transparent protective films and a polarizing membrane provided between the transparent protective films, wherein at least one of the protective films is an optical compensatory sheet which consists of a polymer film containing a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured is measured~~ when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $\text{Rth590-Rth450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$, and wherein the optical compensatory sheet and the polarizing membrane are so placed that the transmission axis of the membrane is parallel or perpendicular to the slow axis of the polymer film.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): An image display device comprising having a polarizing plate; said polarizing plate comprising a pair of transparent protective films and a polarizing membrane provided between the transparent protective films, wherein at least one of the protective films is an optical compensatory sheet which consists of a polymer film containing a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being-measured~~ is measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $\text{Rth590} - \text{Rth450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$, and wherein the optical compensatory sheet and the polarizing membrane are so placed that the transmission axis of the membrane is parallel or perpendicular to the slow axis of the polymer film.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An optical compensatory sheet which comprises an optically anisotropic layer and a polymer film, said optically anisotropic layer being formed from a liquid crystal compound, and wherein said polymer film ~~containing~~ contains a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being-measured~~ is measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the

range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $R_{th590} - R_{th450} \geq 2$ nm.

Claim 13 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the polymer film has an Re retardation value of Re450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 10 to 60 nm, and an Re retardation value of Re590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 20 to 70 nm, said values of the Re450 and Re590 satisfying the condition of $Re_{590} - Re_{450} \geq 2$ nm.

Claim 14 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the polymer film is made of cellulose ester.

Claim 15 (Original): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the polymer film is a film stretched with a stretching ratio of 3 to 100%.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound has a linear molecular structure.

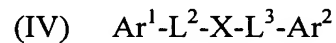
Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is a liquid crystal.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 12, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is represented by the formula (III):



in which each of Ar¹ and Ar² independently is an aromatic group; and L¹ is a divalent linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, an alkenylene group, an alkynylene group, a divalent saturated heterocyclic group, -O-, -CO- and a combination thereof.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The optical compensatory sheet of claim 18, wherein the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is represented by the formula (IV):



in which each of Ar¹ and Ar² independently is an aromatic group; each of L² and L³ independently is a divalent linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, -O-, -CO- and a combination thereof; and X is 1,4-cyclohexylene, vinylene or ethynylene.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An image display device comprising ~~having~~ an optical compensatory sheet, wherein the optical compensatory sheet comprises an optically anisotropic layer and a polymer film, said optically anisotropic layer being formed from a liquid crystal compound, and wherein said polymer film ~~containing~~ contains a ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured~~ is measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $\text{Rth590-Rth450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A polarizing plate comprising a pair of transparent protective films and a polarizing membrane provided between the transparent protective films, wherein at least one of the protective films is an optical compensatory sheet which comprises an optically anisotropic layer and a polymer film, said optically anisotropic layer being formed from a liquid crystal compound, and wherein said polymer film ~~containing~~ contains a ~~red-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of the ~~red-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured~~ is measured when the ~~red-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $\text{Rth590} - \text{Rth450} \geq 2 \text{ nm}$, and wherein the optical compensatory sheet and the polarizing membrane are so placed that the transmission axis of the membrane is parallel or perpendicular to the slow axis of the polymer film.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): An image display device comprising ~~having~~ a polarizing plate, said polarizing plate comprising a pair of transparent protective films and a polarizing membrane provided between the transparent protective films, wherein at least one of the protective films is an optical compensatory sheet which comprises an optically anisotropic layer and a polymer film, said optically anisotropic layer being formed from a liquid crystal compound, and wherein said polymer film ~~containing~~ contains a ~~red-like~~ rod-shaped compound, which gives an ultraviolet absorption spectrum, in which the wavelength of λ_{max} at the maximum absorption peak is shorter than 250 nm, wherein said spectrum of

the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound ~~being measured~~ is measured when the ~~rod-like~~ rod-shaped compound is in the form of a solution, wherein the polymer film has an Rth retardation value of Rth450 measured at the wavelength of 450 nm in the range of 30 to 160 nm, and an Rth retardation value of Rth590 measured at the wavelength of 590 nm in the range of 50 to 200 nm, said values of the Rth450 and Rth590 satisfying the condition of $Rth590 - Rth450 \geq 2 \text{ nm}$, and wherein the optical compensatory sheet and the polarizing membrane are so placed that the transmission axis of the membrane is parallel or perpendicular to the slow axis of the polymer film.